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REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL ON THE UNITED NATIONS ANGOLA VERIFICATION MISSION (UNAVEM II)

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to Security Council resolution 890 (1993) of 15 December 1993, paragraph 3 of which extended the existing mandate of the United Nations Angola Verification Mission (UNAVEM II) until 16 March 1994. In addition, paragraph 7 of that resolution requested me to inform the Council as soon as an effective cease-fire was established and to report on progress made by the parties in the Lusaka talks to further the peace process, establish an effective cease-fire and implement the relevant Council resolutions and the "Acordos de Paz". Since the adoption of that resolution, the Council has been kept informed of developments in Angola. I also submitted a progress report on 29 January 1994 (S/1994/100).

2. In the statement made by the President of the Security Council on 10 February 1994 (S/PRST/1994/7), the Council inter alia, demanded that the Government of Angola and the União Nacional para a Independência Total de Angola (UNITA) redouble their efforts in the Lusaka talks with the aim of establishing, as a matter of urgency, an effective and sustainable cease-fire, completing work on the remaining points of the agenda and concluding a peaceful settlement without procrastination. The Council requested the Secretary-General to keep it informed on a timely basis of developments in the Lusaka peace talks and reaffirmed its readiness to consider my recommendations once an agreement had been concluded between the parties. It also reaffirmed its readiness to consider further action in accordance with its previous resolutions.

II. POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS

3. It will be recalled that the peace talks between the Government and UNITA resumed in Lusaka on 15 November 1993 (see S/26872, para. 12) under the auspices of the United Nations. On 11 December 1993, agreement was reached on the general and specific principles as well as on the modalities relating to all military issues on the agenda: the re-establishment of the cease-fire; the withdrawal, quartering and demilitarization of all UNITA military forces; the disarming of all civilians; and the completion of the formation of the Angolan Armed Forces, including demobilization.

4. Following the agreement reached on the military issues, the discussions moved to the political issues, namely the questions of the police and national reconciliation. By 31 January 1994, agreement had been reached on the general and specific principles and on the modalities relating to the police, including the composition of the rapid intervention police, which had required protracted negotiation.

5. After several rounds of proximity talks and a number of informal consultations, agreement was reached on 17 February 1994 on a document containing a revised text of the general principles concerning the question of national reconciliation. The following day, the first draft of the specific principles relating to this question was distributed.

6. Since 18 February 1994, the Lusaka talks have focused on efforts to bridge the gap between the positions of the Government and UNITA on the specific principles relating to national reconciliation. Despite progress on some important points, it has not yet been possible to reach final agreement on this issue, which includes the allocation of high-level government posts to UNITA.

7. Once agreement is reached on the specific principles as well as on the modalities pertaining to national reconciliation, the remaining items on the agenda will be discussed, namely the future mandate of the United Nations and the role of the three observer States, the conclusion of the electoral process and the re-establishment of a national administration throughout the country.

8. In the statement made by the President of the Security Council on 10 February 1994, the Council deplored the great loss of life and destruction of property caused by the recent outbreak of fighting at several locations throughout Angola and stressed that the only way to achieve an effective, verifiable and sustainable cease-fire was for the Government and UNITA to conclude and sign a comprehensive peace agreement. It called upon the Government and UNITA to honour the commitments they had already voluntarily agreed to in Lusaka, to exercise maximum restraint, to put an immediate halt to all offensive military actions and to commit themselves to the urgent conclusion of the Lusaka talks.

9. As soon as my Special Representative received the Security Council statement, he conveyed it to the Angolan Government and UNITA. Subsequently, the President of Angola, Mr. José Eduardo dos Santos, and the President of UNITA, Mr. Jonas Savimbi, confirmed their determination to pursue the peace process until a comprehensive peace agreement was achieved.

10. During this period, my Special Representative had the opportunity to exchange views on the situation in Angola with President dos Santos as well as with a number of other African leaders, including the Presidents of Cape Verde, Namibia, Sao Tome and Principe and Zambia.

III. MILITARY SITUATION

11. Regrettably, since my last report to the Security Council, the military situation in Angola has remained volatile. According to numerous reports, some

of which UNAVEM II was able to confirm, fighting at varying levels of intensity continued in the provinces of Bengo, Benguela, Bié, Kuando Kubango, Kwanza Norte, Kwanza Sul, Lunda Norte, Lunda Sul and Malange. Several major cities remained under siege, encircled or under sustained military pressure by one or the other side, resulting in increased hardship for the civilian population and compounding the already disastrous humanitarian situation.

12. The end of January 1994 was marked by an intense ground and air offensive by the Government in the northern provinces of Bengo and Kwanza Norte. These military actions brought the strategically important coastal city of Ambriz under government control. Several reports, some of which were confirmed by United Nations military observers, indicated that there was also heavy fighting north of the provincial capital of Caxito and in the area of Ukua at the beginning of February 1994.

13. Intense fighting broke out in and around the besieged city of Kuito/Bié on 5 February. There were conflicting accounts of how it started. United Nations sources confirmed that the hostilities resulted in at least 50 deaths and 70 injuries on 5 and 6 February alone. Shelling subsequently resumed on 10 and 11 February, seriously disrupting humanitarian efforts. Meanwhile, on 7 February, hostilities had also affected Huambo which, as United Nations sources confirmed, was the target of an aerial bombardment. As a result of these developments, deliveries of relief supplies to some parts of the country were temporarily suspended.

14. On 12 February 1994, hostilities resumed in Malange and lasted with varying intensity until 17 February. According to information available to UNAVEM II, shelling of the city resulted in casualties among the civilian population. More recently, on 2 March, the Malange airport was again shelled during the unloading of a World Food Programme (WFP) aircraft. The situation there remains tense.

15. Meanwhile, UNITA was reportedly concentrating war matériel and carrying out military activities in Kwanza Sul province. The government media also reported a build-up of UNITA forces in the provinces of Cabinda and Zaire. A high-ranking military officer at the Angolan Armed Forces headquarters asserted that intense fighting and heavy shelling took place in Chimbuande in Cabinda province. At the same time, the Government, as well as UNITA, were reported to be concentrating and moving troops within the province of Kwanza Sul. There was also information concerning military operations in the northern part of the country and in Huíla province. However, in recent weeks, the intensity of hostilities has generally diminished.

16. The government media allege that the embargo imposed against UNITA by Security Council resolution 864 (1993) has been violated and that it continues to receive substantial shipments of war matériel and other assistance from abroad, including by air. Meanwhile, UNITA complained publicly about the alleged importation by the Government of large quantities of military equipment as well as the employment of foreign military personnel.

17. As members of the Security Council are aware, the ability of UNAVEM II to monitor and evaluate the military situation is limited. Its strength now stands at 50 military observers, 18 police officers and 11 military medical personnel,

who are deployed at 5 locations, namely Luanda, Lubango, Namibe Benguela and Sumbe. Their presence is an important contribution to the search for a political solution to the Angolan crisis, but they are overstretched and consequently their effectiveness is limited.

18. As mandated by the Security Council, I am continuing with the necessary preparations and contingency planning to enable the United Nations to take appropriate steps once a comprehensive settlement is concluded and an effective and sustainable cease-fire is established. A senior military planning officer from the Secretariat has recently reviewed with my Special Representative and the Chief Military Observer of UNAVEM II a possible framework for an enlarged operation. In my previous reports to the Council, I have indicated that the expanded tasks that the Organization might be asked to perform would require a substantial number of United Nations personnel, in particular formed units, as well as military and police observers.

19. Owing to the nature of the conflict, it would be very important to avoid a delay between the signing of an agreement in Lusaka and the arrival in Angola of the required number of United Nations troops and observers. It would therefore be essential to establish, almost immediately, a minimum presence of United Nations military and police monitors, at least in areas of major confrontation, to verify that the cease-fire is generally maintained until the arrival of peace-keeping forces. This rapid deployment of additional United Nations observers would also serve to reassure both the Government and UNITA of the commitment of the international community. I am pursuing informal contacts with Member States with a view to obtaining the necessary observers and troops and deploying them as quickly as possible to Angola, after the conclusion of a comprehensive peace agreement. I urge Member States to respond positively to the preliminary approaches of the Secretariat in this regard.

IV. HUMANITARIAN SITUATION

20. Since my last report to the Security Council, United Nations agencies and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have increased considerably the volume of humanitarian assistance distributed in all provinces of Angola. In spite of the difficulties encountered, WFP delivered, in January 1994, 15,838 tons of relief materials by land and by air. However, intensified fighting and security incidents in the provinces of Bié, Huambo and Malange, among other locations, seriously hampered emergency relief activities. If this trend continues, the humanitarian programme that has been painstakingly built up over the past year could be jeopardized.

21. The resumption of fighting in Kuito/Bié in early February claimed hundreds of civilian casualties. Humanitarian activities were seriously disrupted and the personnel of several NGOs operating in the area were evacuated to Luanda. Fortunately, the shelling of Huambo did not affect the activities of the humanitarian agencies operating in that area. On 10 February, the Government announced that, if humanitarian aid could not be distributed because of the incessant shelling by UNITA of the provincial capital of Kuito/Bié, it would cancel all humanitarian flights to areas under UNITA control. The efforts of my Special Representative, supported by the Humanitarian Assistance Coordination

Unit in Luanda, made it possible to obtain safety guarantees for flights to Kuito/Bié from UNITA leaders and the Government, with effect from 14 February 1994.

22. Meanwhile, the general humanitarian situation in Malange has improved mainly as a result of the stepping-up of United Nations and NGO operations, including the increase in WFP deliveries from 1,300 tons in December 1993 to 3,242 tons in February 1994. However, the intensification of shelling of the airport and the city centre has seriously hampered WFP's humanitarian activities. On 16 February, the only WFP aircraft that was able to land in Malange was slightly damaged by a mortar explosion. Fortunately, the aircraft was able to return to Luanda. The same day, two shells landed close to the WFP distribution site, killing and injuring a large number of people. On the following day, a WFP aircraft that was about to land in Malange had to return to Luanda because of the resumption of the shelling. Following intensive consultations with UNITA leaders, WFP was able to resume its daily flights on 18 February.

23. In the face of the deterioration of the food and health situation in Huambo, the United Nations system and the NGOs intensified their activities in the city. The Humanitarian Assistance Coordination Unit deployed one of its officers there in order to facilitate communication with Luanda and to ensure better on-the-spot coordination of humanitarian assistance.

24. In spite of the efforts made by the international community, WFP food stocks are being rapidly depleted. They need to be replenished urgently in order to ensure that complete rations of dried food and supplementary food are made available to the target populations.

25. My Special Representative has emphasized to several visiting dignitaries the importance of international solidarity to help Angola to cope with its immediate and post-war needs, including relief supplies for demobilized military personnel and their families. The visitors' purpose was to obtain information on the immediate needs of the disadvantaged populations and the efforts made by the United Nations system in the area of humanitarian assistance, and to assess prospects after a comprehensive peace agreement is concluded. They included Ms. Catherine Bertini, Executive Director of WFP; Mrs. Lisbet Palme, widow of the former Prime Minister of Sweden; and senior United States congressional staff members.

26. On 28 February 1994, the Department of Humanitarian Affairs issued the 1994 revised inter-agency appeal for Angola, seeking US$ 179 million for emergency aid between February and July 1994. The appeal targets some 3.3 million Angolans in need of relief assistance, up from 2 million in the original appeal of May 1993. In recognition of the important role played by national and international NGOs in the relief effort in Angola, NGO project proposals accompany those of the United Nations operational agencies in the appeal. The appeal calls for special donor attention to non-food sectors such as health, nutrition, agriculture and water and sanitation, which have been seriously underfunded up to now, and underlines the importance of assistance for demining as well as for the demobilization of former combatants in the context of a future peace agreement.

27. The overall humanitarian situation in Angola has improved over the last two months, particularly as a result of the increase in multisectoral assistance. However, humanitarian needs in parts of the provinces of Benguela, Bié, Huambo, Huíla and Uíge have not yet been accurately assessed, for lack of security or difficulty of access. A complete and durable cessation of hostilities would enable relief organizations to expand their assessments and build rapidly on the progress already achieved in alleviating the suffering of the affected populations.

V. FINANCIAL ASPECTS

28. The General Assembly, by its decision 48/465 of 23 December 1993, authorized me to enter into commitments in the amount of US$ 6.8 million gross (US$ 6.4 million net) for the maintenance of UNAVEM II for the period from 16 December 1993 to 31 March 1994 and decided that the amount of US$ 6,478,800 gross (US$ 6,097,700 net) be apportioned among Member States. The cost for the maintenance of the Mission at its current strength beyond 16 March 1994 will be US$ 2,098,900 gross (US$ 1,996,950 net) per month as set out in the report of the Secretary-General (A/48/836), should the Security Council decide to extend the current mandate of UNAVEM II.

29. The cash-flow situation of the special account of UNAVEM II continues to be very critical. As of 28 February 1994, outstanding assessed contributions to UNAVEM I and UNAVEM II amount to some US$ 27.5 million. This represents approximately 16 per cent of the total amount assessed on Member States since the inception of the Mission through 31 March 1994. In order to provide UNAVEM II with the necessary cash-flow requirements, loans in a total amount of US$ 29 million have been borrowed from the peace-keeping reserve fund (US$ 19 million) and other peace-keeping accounts (US$ 10 million). These amounts have not been repaid.

30. Should the Security Council decide to authorize an increase in the existing strength of UNAVEM II as described in paragraph 36 below, I shall request the General Assembly at its current session to make adequate financial provisions for the enlargement of the Mission.

VI. OBSERVATIONS

31. Since 31 January 1994, the negotiations have, with the adoption of the document on the general and specific principles and modalities concerning the police, taken a decisive turn and are proceeding towards the conclusion of a comprehensive peace agreement. Indeed, during the consideration of the question of the police, the Government as well as the UNITA leadership manifested their determination to resolve this problem, whose solution was crucial for the continuation of the talks. Agreement has already been reached on the general principles pertaining to national reconciliation, and the negotiations are now focused on the specific principles, particularly on the participation of UNITA in the political, administrative and economic institutions of the country.

32. The precarious nature of the current military situation underscores once again that it is of the utmost importance for the Government and UNITA to exercise maximum restraint on the ground in order to ensure the success of the Lusaka talks. To this end, both the Government and UNITA also need to show greater flexibility in addressing the remaining issues on the agenda, particularly with regard to the question of national reconciliation, the conclusion of the electoral process and the re-establishment of national administration throughout the country.

33. Taking into account the progress made in the Lusaka talks, I would like to reiterate the recommendations contained in my previous report that, for the time being, the Security Council continue to adhere to the provisions of paragraph 14 of resolution 890 (1993), which remains the most appropriate way to handle the current situation. However, as I indicated in my last report, I will immediately submit to the Council, should circumstances so warrant, recommendations for the imposition of additional measures or for the review of those already in effect.

34. UNAVEM II is clearly an essential factor in the ongoing efforts to achieve a comprehensive political settlement in Angola and to provide support to the humanitarian assistance programme there. I therefore recommend that the mandate of UNAVEM II be extended at its current strength for an additional period of three months. I shall continue to inform the Security Council of the course of the negotiations, and I will send a technical mission to Angola and submit recommendations for a new, enlarged mandate for the United Nations there, as soon as a comprehensive peace agreement is reached in Lusaka.

35. Recent experience in other operations has demonstrated that the United Nations would require a period of three to five months to deploy a full-fledged and effective peace-keeping mission on the ground. As already stated, it would therefore be important for the Organization to be in a position to deploy immediately, as an initial step, military and police observers, at least in the most sensitive regions of the country, immediately after the conclusion of a comprehensive peace agreement. Failure to do so could jeopardize a settlement in its initial and most critical stages.

36. In the circumstances, the most judicious approach would perhaps be to put in place arrangements that would allow the United Nations to respond quickly to the evolution of the peace process. I would like, therefore, to recommend to the Security Council that it authorize in principle an increase in the existing strength of UNAVEM II to its previous level of 350 military observers, 126 police observers and 14 military medical staff, with an appropriate number of international and local civilian staff, on the understanding that the additional personnel would be deployed when an overall settlement has been agreed or when I advise the Council that the Lusaka talks have reached a stage where their successful conclusion is imminent.

37. Despite the serious obstacles resulting from the military operations on the ground, humanitarian activities carried out by the United Nations system and NGOs have continued throughout the country. This crucial effort not only alleviates the suffering of the affected population but also contributes to the creation of a climate conducive to a political settlement. I pay tribute to the

courage and determination of the humanitarian organizations in carrying out their mission. I also renew my appeal to the Government and UNITA to provide the necessary security guarantees and to refrain from any action that would endanger relief workers or disrupt the provision of humanitarian assistance to the people of Angola.

38. The staff of UNAVEM II continue to demonstrate exemplary devotion to duty in difficult circumstances. I would like to pay tribute in particular to my Special Representative and to the Chief Military Observer of UNAVEM II for the determination with which they continue to fulfil their duties.